ITM Web of Conferences **70**, 02015 (2025) https://doi.org/10.1051/itmconf/20257002015
DAI 2024

Particle Swarm Optimization Algorithm and Its Application in Image Segmentation

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Abstract. The complexity and scale of image data are growing due to the fast advancement of medical imaging technology. As a result, traditional image segmentation methods are finding it difficult to handle these data, as they typically perform poorly when faced with complex structures and noise. In order to greatly increase the segmentation accuracy and resilience, this study presents the Particle Swarm Optimization (PSO) technique, which optimizes the segmentation parameters through global search, and K-means in image segmentation for fatty liver level recognition and their optimization strategies. The paper concludes that heuristic optimization algorithms such as the PSO have gained considerable focus. This paper provides insight into the application of the PSO algorithm, Otsu's Method, and the Watershed within the field of image segmentation for their global search capability and adaptability to complex problems. Meanwhile, classical segmentation methods such as OSTU, Watershed and K-means are also widely used in medical image processing due to their simplicity and effectiveness. The PSO simulates information sharing and collaboration between individuals in a population to optimize the process of image segmentation. This paper concludes that the PSO outperforms traditional methods such as OSTU, Watershed Algorithm and K-means clustering in image segmentation for liver fat level identification, especially in both complex images and lighting conditions, and shows strong accuracy and stability.

1 Introduction

In the big data era, medical image processing faces two major challenges: one is the increase in data dimensions, and the other is the dispersion and complexity of data. To meet these challenges, models need to be more capable of learning and adapting to integrate multiple types of information. However, traditional data analysis methods can no longer meet these requirements, so it is urgent to develop new technologies to extract useful information from massive medical image data and realize effective application.

Medical image segmentation plays a significant role in processing complex data. It is able to clearly separate different tissues and structures in an image, providing accurate information for diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Advantages include improved diagnostic accuracy, support for quantitative analysis, optimisation of treatment options, and enhanced

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information integration in big data. The goal is to decompose images into regions or objects with semantic information, providing a basis for further image analysis and understanding. In medical image processing, problems such as uneven image quality, noise interference, labelling difficulties and blurred tissue boundaries are often encountered. These difficulties complicate automatic analysis and diagnosis, and image segmentation techniques can help to accurately delineate different tissue or lesion regions, thereby enhancing both the precision and effectiveness of image analysis.

However, it is frequently challenging to respond well to classic division approaches because of the complexity and diversity of medical images. Traditional image segmentation methods mostly segment images by basic features such as colour and texture. These methods are usually limited by complex background, noise interference and computational complexity, and the common methods in this category are threshold, edge, clustering, and graph theory based segmentation [1]. Deep learning is a novel area of machine learning that mimics the human brain to automatically learn the abstract aspects of data at all levels, with the goal of better reflecting the key features of the data.

Precise and accurate segmentation is crucial for diagnosis and treatment planning in the field of visualization, particularly when determining liver fat levels in medical imaging. The standard fuzzy C-means (Fuzzy C-means) clustering algorithms have some clear difficulties and restrictions when working with medical images, despite their strong performance in basic image segmentation tasks. First off, because the algorithm used in FCM is a local search method, the choice of the starting clustering center has a significant impact on the process's outcomes. This makes the algorithm prone to local minima, especially in the case of uneven grey scale distribution or complex texture of the image, and its segmentation results may be distorted or inaccurate.

In order to overcome these limitations of FCM algorithm, the PSO algorithm becomes one of the most suitable global optimisation methods. The PSO is a heuristic worldwide search algorithm that is based on group cognitive ability and is currently in its infancy. It is simple to use, understand, and has robust worldwide search capabilities. The PSO algorithm finds the best solutions in complicated spaces by using competition as well as cooperation between people. Each particle in the swarm moves in the solution space at a specific speed and gathers towards its own history best position, neighborhood history best position, and optimal location to achieve the progression of the desired solution [2]. At the same time, everyone in the swarm is regarded as particles with no size or mass in the D-dimensional search space. For image segmentation tasks, the PSO algorithm can be utilized to adjust the segmentation threshold or optimize the boundaries of segmentation results, which in turn improves the accuracy and stability of the segmentation process.The global search property of PSO enables it to avoid falling into local optimal solutions to deal with complex medical diagnostic images.The purpose of this work is to investigate how to use the PSO algorithm to optimize the image segmentation process in order to increase segmentation efficiency and accuracy. In order to fully utilize the benefits of the FCM in handling data clustering, this paper suggests combining the FCM clustering algorithm with the algorithm known as the PSO. The FCM clustering criterion function is used as the particle fitness function in the PSO algorithm, and the clustering results are optimized through the PSO's global optimization-seeking capability. This combination improves the accuracy of liver fat level recognition and enhances the algorithm's ability to adapt to the complexity of medical image features. By organically combining these two algorithms, the limitations of a single algorithm in complex medical image segmentation can be effectively overcome, providing new ideas and methods for future medical image processing research and applications.

2 Data and Methods

2.1 Data

This paper uses public medical imaging databases, such as TCIA (The Cancer Imaging Archive) and other databases dedicated to medical image research, to collect a lot of data on fatty liver images. These data sources contain symptoms of patients of different ages, genders, races, and health conditions. These data sets are generally highly reliable and accurate. These data are annotated and verified by professional doctors or researchers to ensure the correctness of the lesion information and features contained in the images.

The diversity of data sources helps to train a model with broad adaptability that can handle different types and degrees of fatty liver lesions. Different images have different data storage methods, among which medical images are mainly in DICOM and NII formats. In the process of image generation, transmission, and storage, image clarity will inevitably decrease, contrast will be low, and noise will be included. Therefore, it is necessary to preprocess the image, that is, to use some technologies and methods to optimize the quality of the image, to lay a good foundation for the subsequent image analysis process.

Therefore, this article performs corresponding data preprocessing operations: First, convert the raw image data into a computer-processable format, such as JPEG, PNG, or DICOM, and ensure that all images have the same resolution and size to ensure consistency in model training and prediction. Next, grayscale the color image to simplify input and calculation while highlighting key features. Then, use appropriate filters (such as Gaussian filters or median filters) to remove noise from the image to reduce interference with subsequent analysis. Image enhancement is performed to adjust contrast or brightness to ensure the model can effectively learn features. Finally, normalize pixel values to an appropriate range, such as [0, 1] or [-1, 1], to ensure stability and convergence of model training. Finally, quality checks and data balancing are performed to ensure that the quality of the preprocessed images is good, without obvious artifacts, distortion, or processing residues. Ensure that the number of samples in each category (such as fatty liver grade) in the training data is balanced to avoid the model being biased towards certain categories.

2.2 Methods

This paper adopts the particle swarm optimization algorithm, which is inspired by the collective behavior of birds. The fundamental concept is collaborating and sharing among group members to get the best solution.In particle swarm optimization algorithms, "particle" refers to the solution to any optimization problem that arises in the search space. These particles are projected into n-dimensional space and abstracted as massless points, i.e., particles. Random solutions, or a collection of random particles, make up the starting state of the PSO. Iteration is then used to find the best option. The particle updates itself in each cycle by monitoring two "extreme values" ($\mathrm{P_{best}}$, $\mathrm{P_{best}}$). Following the determination of these two ideal values, the particle modifies its own position and speed [2]. For the kth iteration, each particle in the PSO changes according to equations (1) and (2):

$$v_{id}^{k+1} = w \times v_{id}^{k} + c_1 \times r_1 \times \left(P_{id} - x_{id}^{k}\right) + c_2 \times r_2 \times \left(P_{gd} - x_{id}^{k}\right) \tag{1}$$

$$x_{id}^{k+1} = x_{id}^{k} + v_{id}^{k+1} \times \Delta t \tag{2}$$

In Equation (1), (2), i=1,2,3,..., M . M represents the total number of particles) ; v represents the d-th component of the velocity vector of the k-th generation particle i; $\mathrm{c_1}$,$\mathrm{c_2}$is the acceleration constant; Δt is the time step[3]; x is the d-th dimensions part of a particle i position vector at the kth repetition.

Where, r_1,r_2 is the function of chance that creates an unordered number from [0,1]; w is the weight of the inertia. In this context, (P_{gd}) represents the optimal position for the group, while (P_{id}) denotes the (d)-th coordinate of the best position P_{best} found by particle (i). The particle is continuously updated by learning, the d-th dimension component of g_{best}, and eventually comes to the location of the ideal solution in the solution space, marking the conclusion of the procedure of searching. The global best approach is given by the final result g [4].

The PSO algorithm's benefits include its simplicity, ease of application, and strong closure for problems involving multi-dimensional optimization. As a result, it has been extensively applied in domains like image processing, neural network training, and function optimization[5]. The secret is to discover the best solution by skillfully balancing knowledge-based information gathering (local search) with exploratory research (global search)[6].

An algorithm for partition-based clustering is called the FCM algorithm. The aim behind it is to decrease similarity between distinct clusters and maximize similarity between objects that are divided into the same cluster[7]. The fuzzy assignment mechanism, the fact that every data point has a membership value for every cluster between 0 and 1, and the fact that the FCM method minimizes the objective function are just a few of its noteworthy aspects. The objective is to reduce the weighted distance between every statistic and its respective cluster center.

The algorithm iteratively updates the membership and cluster center until the result converges. Due to its fuzziness, FCM is particularly suitable for processing data sets with unclear boundaries.

3 Results Analysis

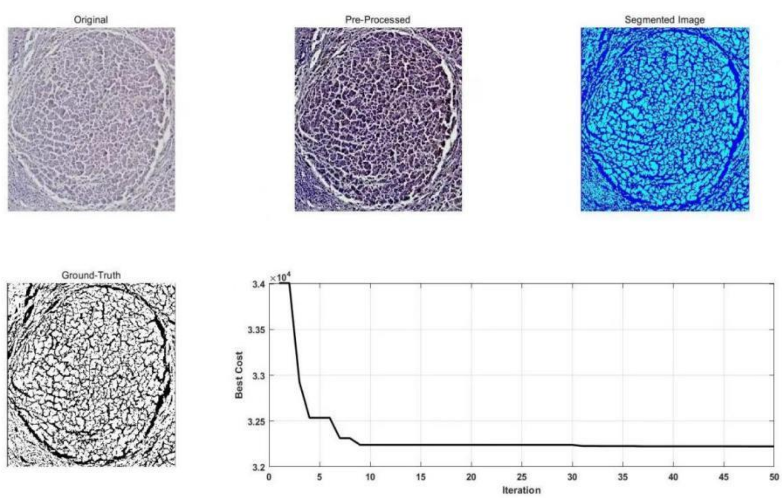

Fig. 1. Analysis of the results of liver fat levels (Photo/Picture credit : Original)

As shown in Fig. 1, the image in the upper left corner is the original image, showing the original shape of the liver tissue. The upper middle image has undergone pre-processing steps such as image enhancement and noise removal to clearly show the organisational structure. The image at the top right shows the results of the segmentation to identify and highlight fatty areas in the image, showing the distribution of fat in the liver tissue. The segmentation algorithm's performance is assessed using the image on the bottom left, which displays the actual outcomes of the segmentation. The trend of the cost function for several iterations is displayed in the graph at the bottom right. The curve shows the model's optimization process by rapidly declining in the initial phases of each iteration and then tending to be stable. The cost function's value stabilizes after a specific amount of iterations, suggesting that the model is almost to its ideal state.

As can be seen from this graph, the image preprocessing and segmentation process is very important for the accurate analysis of fat levels, while the cost function curve shows the performance of the model under continuous optimization. Comparing Original data with the real situation, it can be seen that the real situation can visualize data more intuitively than the Original image, and through the cost function curve, the index decreases from to, indicating that the performance has been improved. The quality of the Original image is improved by preprocessing, and the error of the Ground-Truth is reduced. It can be concluded that the performance of the PSO algorithm changes with multiple iterations: the accuracy becomes higher and higher, and the loss function becomes smaller and smaller.

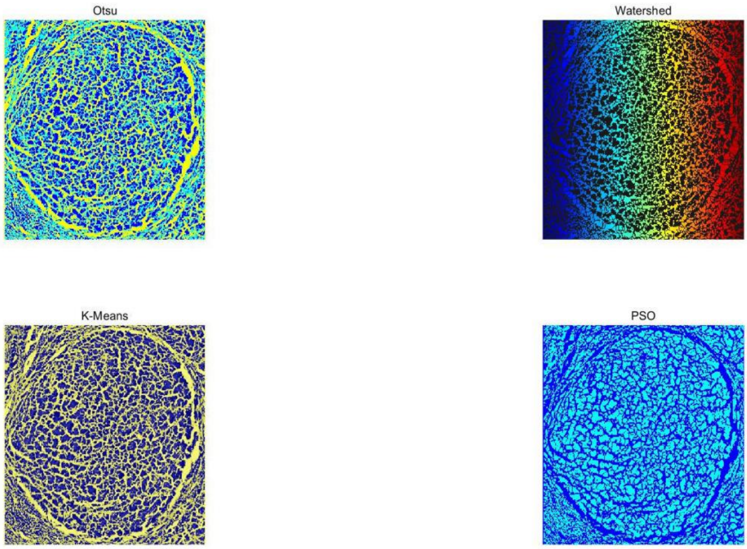

Fig. 2. Image comparison between PSO algorithm and traditional method in image segmentation (Photo/Picture credit : Original)

In Fig. 2, "Otsu, ""Watershed," "K-Means, "and "PSO" are the names of several different image processing and data analysis algorithms. Among them, Otsu threshold method, Watershed watershed algorithm and K-Means clustering method are all traditional methods. By comparison, these algorithms show the application effect in fatty liver level recognition when evaluating the performance of PSO algorithm, that is, image segmentation, clustering and optimization. The comparison between PSO algorithm and traditional algorithm can be obtained through the experiments in Fig. 2. In terms of performance evaluation, although the traditional method is simple and intuitive, the effect is unstable in processing complex images and changeable lighting conditions, and the threshold needs to be adjusted manually. In contrast, modern algorithms using techniques such as deep learning or convolutional neural networks can provide higher accuracy and generalization, but require large amounts of labeled data and computational resources, and long training and reasoning times. In terms of parameter adjustment, the PSO depends on parameter Settings, such as particle number, inertia weight, learning factor, etc., which has a good global search ability and is suitable for solving large-scale problems. However, the traditional algorithm has fewer parameters, usually depends on the mathematical characteristics of the problem itself, and is inferior to the PSO in global search ability, especially in high-dimensional space[8]

Through the experimental analysis, the PSO algorithm shows obvious advantages in the liver fat level recognition image segmentation task. It optimizes segmentation results through global search, while providing flexibility and efficiency. Although modern deep learning methods may provide higher accuracy in some cases, the PSO is still a very promising option considering its advantages in resource consumption and algorithm implementation complexity, especially in situations where resources are limited or data is small [9]. Therefore, the PSO algorithm has extensive application potential within medical imaging and provides an effective and reliable solution for liver fat level recognition. It seeks optimal segmentation results through global optimization, avoids falling into local optimization, and flexibly ADAPTS to different data sets and problems in terms of parameter adjustment and algorithm setting [10]. To sum up, the PSO algorithm shows good robustness and effect in simplified models and resource-limited scenarios. Although modern algorithms may provide higher accuracy, the PSO still has significant advantages in practical applications. This hybrid method of FCM and the PSO algorithm has wide application potential, not only limited to liver fat level recognition, but also can be extended to other medical fields requiring high-precision image segmentation, such as tumor detection, organ segmentation, etc.

4 Conclusion

This paper mainly carries out the image segmentation task of liver fat level recognition. This paper compares the PSO with OSTU threshold, watershed and K-means clustering. It is concluded that the PSO algorithm shows multiple advantages, especially the ability to cope with complex images and lighting conditions.

In this paper, the image segmentation task of liver fat level recognition is mainly carried out. In this paper, the PSO is compared with OSTU threshold, watershed and K-means clustering. It is concluded that the PSO algorithm shows multiple advantages, especially the ability to cope with complex images and lighting conditions.

Through global optimization, the PSO algorithm can effectively overcome the segmentation instability problem which is easy to appear in traditional OSTU method when dealing with uneven illumination or large noise interference. Compared with the watershed algorithm, PSO can more accurately delineate the boundary between hepatic fat region and other tissues while maintaining the overall structural integrity, avoiding over-segmentation or under-segmentation. In addition, compared with K-means clustering method, PSO algorithm does not need to rely on pre-set clustering center, and can automatically adjust parameters to adapt to different data sets and conditions.

When evaluating the performance of the PSO algorithm in liver fat level recognition, although this algorithm shows unique advantages, there are also some limitations. The PSO is superior in global optimization, but its convergence is slow, especially when dealing with large or complex data. This can result in more iterations being required to reach the optimal solution, and its training and reasoning time may be less efficient than that of modern algorithms such as deep learning. Secondly, the PSO algorithm is more sensitive to parameter Settings, such as particle number, inertia weight, etc., and needs to handle the corresponding adjustment of different data sets and problems to ensure the best collocation. In addition, although the PSO is designed for global optimization, it is still possible to fall into local optimal solutions in complex problems, such as in high-dimensional Spaces or where there are multiple local best advantages. Finally, the PSO is sensitive to noise and poor image quality, which may affect the stability and accuracy of its segmentation results. As a result, in real-world applications, it is essential to balance the benefits and drawbacks of the PSO algorithm and decide whether to use a hybrid approach or a different algorithm to further optimize in accordance with the particular attributes of the issue.

In order to identify fatty liver level photos and analyze medical issues, this work investigates the application of the particle swarm optimization algorithm in segmenting images. It shows that the PSO technique can considerably enhance the accuracy and stability of image segmentation. The PSO algorithm has significant practical value in resolving challenging image analysis issues due to its efficacy and simplicity. The combination of PSO with deep learning techniques and its potential for 3D image and video sequence segmentation should be further investigated in future studies.

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